CHELTENHAM

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ADAM FIELED

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Cheltenham by Adam Fieled

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CHELTENHAM

I. Cheltenham Elegies

#261

Never one to cut corners about cutting
corners, you spun the Subaru into a rough
U-turn right in the middle of Old York Road
at midnight, scaring the shit out of this self-
declared "artist." The issue, as ever, was
nothing particular to celebrate. We could
only connect nothing with nothing in our
private suburban waste land. Here's where
the fun starts— I got out, motherfucker.
I made it. I say "I," and it works. But Old
York Road at midnight is still what it is.
I still have to live there the same way you do.

#412

Each thinks the other a lonesome reprobate.
That's what I guess when I see the picture.
It's Elkins Park Square on a cold spring night;
they're almost sitting on their hands. One
went up, as they say, one went down, but
you'll never hear a word of this in Cheltenham.
They can't gloat anymore, so they make an
art of obfuscation. That's why I seldom go
back. Elkins Park Square is scary at night.
There are ghosts by the ice skating rink.

#414

And out of this nexus, O sacred
scribe, came absolutely no one.
I don’t know what you expected
to find here. This warm, safe,
comforting suburb has a smother
button by which souls are unraveled.
Who would know better than you?
Even if you’re only in the back of
your mind asphyxiating. He looked
out the window— cars dashed by
on Limekiln Pike. What is it, he said,
are you dead or do you think you’re Shakespeare?

#421

Huddled in the back of a red
Jetta, I thought we were in a
Springsteen song. But there are
no backstreets in Cheltenham.
It's only the strip-mall to house
and back circuit. Anyone could've
seen us. It wasn't a full consummation—
for want of a graceful phrase, we
were too smart to fuck. There was
no playing hero for me. Nor did I
force you to confess. What could you say?
Cheltenham was soft, and all too infested.

#193

Why, as I climb Old York Road,
the bridge is a foreboding one—
thousands here hurled from
pitiless heights, as was decided
each time by casual stooges,
whose own eventual, catastrophic
deaths were not faced by
themselves or anyone else:
Kabuki puppet deaths, Old York Road
another puppet stage.

Past midnight, into the early
morning: nothing for you to paint
here. Just that sense, from
the front seat of an old Volkswagon,
of what worlds can never change
for people like us. What soothes
& slays is the same thing:
things in real life get stuck,
for better or worse, & peace
is all in being willing to stick, too. Right?

#671

Even as a little girl, she got beat down.
There was something wrong with her brains.
She couldn't relate to people. Cheltenham
guys noticed how adorably doll-like she was
(lookin' real good, like Natalie Wood), but she
wouldn't date anyone. She died a mysterious
social drowning death. She got older and
became a Tennessee Williams heroine-as-Jewess.
I'm telling you this because I nailed her, dude.
I got her to give me a blowjob.

#681

The kids scamper around the pool and jump in.
She's having an affair, and watching her kids
with the others. What, was her sex life supposed
to be over? She was supposed to stop dead at
thirty-eight, and forever hold her peace? And
is she that much of a back-stabber, considering
what she's been put through? The older guys
at the pool still do look at her. They've been warned.

#415

There's something sweet and sickly
about teenagers fucking. Even laid
down by the jagged rocks that bordered
Tookany Creek. I think of them there,
and know he's getting wasted. What's
draining out of him is the will to live.
She always gets him off somehow. Then
they would walk over to the Little League
field and huddle in the dugout. He didn't
even wind up graduating from Cheltenham
on time. I can't get over thinking who he
could've been. Am I the only one?

#416

It's two in the morning— this big empty field is a vacuum sucked into this little girl's mouth. Everything's little, he thinks. At least I'm big enough to get head. The problem is what she wants from me. And what she's bound to get. Just by chance, someone in a passenger seat in a car going by on Church Road sees the outline of the two figures. One is leaning— the blowjob part isn't visible. Wow, he says; this place is strange. He shakes himself, turns up the music, and gets ready for a long ride.

#213

You and your proud working-class ethos.
You, sitting at your laptop, spying on me
on Facebook, jerking your parts off. Go
ahead and pass on that shipment: you'll
get a cut. You're no beauty school dropout,
hanging around the corner store. You need
to know: when they do make me into a rag-
doll, you'll get one of the first batch. You
can wring me out, slam me down on your
linoleum floor, bite my head to your heart's content.

#260

I was too stoned to find the bathroom.
The trees in the dude's backyard made
it look like Africa. You were my hook-up
to this new crowd. The same voice, as always,
cuts in to say you were fucked up even
then. You had a dooming Oedipal
complex. We were all wrapped tight,
even when we got high. I was the
only one getting any, so you both
mistrusted me. African trees & easy
camaraderie. A primitive pact sealed
between warring factions— my spears
(take this as you will) for your grass.

#216

You can force your pen into a cat's anus
for all I care, she told him. October sun-
light hit the grimy pavement as if directed
by Rocky Balboa himself. The Art Museum,
he thinks, is mostly crap but its still imposing—
what man has made of man, fodder for gift-
shops. His working life is a gift-shop too—
no one buys anything. If he did force his
pen into a cat's anus, they'd probably arrest
him for animal abuse. Maybe he'll pretend that
she's a cat. Ring the bell for round two, please.

#212

Picture this: thirty kids in a two-story house
in the Poconos. They're little bandits.
Their parents think they're somewhere
else. It's the popular crew: but half the
baseball stars are homosexuals, half the
cheerleaders want to be housewives,
and the football guys are putting on five
pounds a day. They have to carry little
Megan outside for some fresh air; she's
drunk, got ditched by a wide receiver.
She looks at the mountain stars, thinks
(her friend imagines) nothing thoughts
about nothing. Eighteen years later: one
of the homosexual baseball stars is now
at a mountain retreat in the Poconos. He
gets carried out by his lover to look at the
stars, drunk on Mimosas. Nothing gets
thought about nothing again. What do I
think? I'm writing a letter to Nietzsche. Ask h

#160

Your skin hangs around you like an old lady's
loose gown. You used to live a dynamic double
life, with constituents coming out of your ass
from three schools. No one anywhere knew
quite who you were. Now, I hesitate to state
anything for the record these guys are recording.
The whole process creeps me out. I sat in the
back of the Subaru while they egged somebody's
house, or he took a handful of CDs from Tower
Records, placed them under his sweater or into his
boxers. What I tell them is the truth: there was
too much in you that you never even knew about.
You were a mystery to yourself. You were the kid
at the bowling alley trying to hook up with the twins,
or the obsessive devotee of another head-case.
Now, I'm a head-case who knows the same thing
is true about me, and if my skin is tautened it stings.

#448

I was talking to the thin air twenty years ago,
but I still say it: for all the constituents you had
coming out of your ass, poke a hole in you,
there's nothing there. Wall Park that night was
desolate as ever, the moon bothered to hover
bemusedly above, all the rest. Out on the four-square
field of grass which bluntly, flatly dominates
the stupid place, an act was performed that made
your life as completely a parody as slamming back
rancid milk. She seems to have forgotten you, I
thought. The drive-by guys were surprised, to
say the least, as was I, drunk on stolen beer. They were, too.

#268

Satin blouses, trinkets (some kind of
jade pendant), & the big trinket between
her legs that nobody gets to play with.
Rare meat. She's been babied by her
parents since her birth (Rabbit year,
a juxtaposition more sad than ironic),
and suddenly I can teach her something?
And I thought of what she was telling
herself in response, and the words came
to me, "I'm doing this because I promised,
my Mom wants me to do this, now I promised, I have to do
this."

#417

He was always in one of those miscellaneous
conglomerations. Why I had to be subjected
to seeing him with the stoners I don’t know.
It was a bunch of them in the dead of winter,
and I knew him by the leather jacket. They
were trying to get him to “trip” with them. I
used to love the idea of “tripping”; as if real
knowledge weren’t the real trip, and adding
a few chemicals to a brain can turn a dullard
into Aldous Huxley. It was just as miscellaneous
as the nights he spent with us. I used to hate
him for this kind of behavior. There’s no dignity in it.

#418

I remember thinking: boy do I feel Wild at Heart tonight. What a joke— this horrible Cheltenham bitch with a huge nose tries to generate an orgy in her basement. The pot was alright, at least. But Elkins Park gave us the creeps, and we agreed afterwards never to go back. The fucked up thing about that night for me in particular was knowing we would have fun talking about it forever. And we have, so I guess it's not a complete dead loss. The girl I was with pretended I was fucking her, too.

#420

I.

The Junior Prom deposited me (and fifteen
others) on the floor of her basement. I could
barely see daylight at the time, and at three in
the morning I began to prowl. I was too scared
to turn on any lights. She emerged like a mermaid
from seaweed. I needed comfort, she enjoyed my
need. We had gone out— she was bitter. The whole
dialogue happened in shadows. No one was hooking
up in the other room, either. You spiteful little princess.

II.

Whether off the bathroom counter
or the back of your hand, darling,
your unusual vehemence that
winter night, cob-webbed by
half-real figures, was animated by an
unfair advantage, which stooges threw
at you to keep you loopy as you
died piece-meal. All I had
was incomprehensible fury and a
broken heart— when I hit the floor
at four, you were getting ready
to play fire-starter, opened
the little snifter, curled your finger
twice in the right direction; darkness—

Addendum: #420

The craftier angle to hear them: hover
in the doorway, in total darkness, hands
held behind your back. She takes a stand
against him in the shadows, as her lover
flails, barefoot on carpeting: jabs, another—

these two miserable adolescents, tokens
of the dirge that was this tepid Philly 'burb,
clown choruses pining for images, curbed
words replaced with scripts, minds unbroken
finally meeting ends in winter rain, soaking,

drenched with venom against the Solid.
What to look for: register his life-force
energies against hers, for the first course
her rhetoric takes against him, her stolid
defiance, sharply defined, against knowledge

that she's veered over into eerie wilderness.
It's true, the abyss laughs around her, & him,
but she's slightly more bound up in it, thinned,
bruised beneath surfaces to embrace the abyss,
all he needs is a caress given really, a kiss—

he won't get it. What he'll get is the meaning
of the surface she's chosen: bone, dust, webs.
Yet they stand exalted as they taste the dregs—
someone's watching elsewhere, & scheming.
Transmutation must happen, past dreaming—

that spirit, against the animal, is real in them.
The doorway is hinged to show you two souls—
unvarnished, electric, whether riddled with holes

or not, & love of a kind is being made, & gems.
The craftiest angle is not you, if you will, but them—

#702

His heart ached within a drowsy, numbed trance.
Cameras panned to him pacing the black-top, even
blacker at 3 am, which opens out on the expanse
of Mill Road, down the hill, past the school. Night deepened,
he was lonely enough to cry, heartsick for being
the only one of a scabrous tribe gutsy enough to say the name
which even then had rent Cheltenham, riddled
with bullets like a dog's corpse, assassins fleeing
the site of the hit, where the one kid, bound for fame,
did for himself the trick of ditching a tepid middle.

He levitates past himself, flies with bugs into crevices,
is the pilot of the few airplanes wafting by, Pegasus-like
for a mind intent on flight, meeting divinity, heaven's bliss
from a cockpit. Myers' schoolyard glistens like spikes.
She knew him then, at her end— saw how the spine
imposed truth on empty gesture, feeling on pretense,
vital life on the living death of their shared enterprise.
This, he could never know; yet without knowing how, why,
he strode past her emptied house that night, tense,
sweating in summer's stew, pallid in cold surprise.

The apostate flies around a small room, piles of books,
papers scattered, forests of drafts, faintly heard bird-song.
Verdurous plains suggest themselves; moss-softened nooks;
just out of time, to a mind o'er spelled by word-song.
He can only fly as he reads, over & over, the lays
already fastened to moss & flower, secured above
shallow stream. His friend waits, in stealth.
The early morning ride he caught then, from love
given, wasn't her— she had gone the way
there is no coming back— yet he slept himself back to health.

#524

When he drives around Elkins Park in
the dead of night, he thinks, this is how
I like the human race— asleep. When three roads
fork at Myers, he goes down Mill Road.
By the time the car climbs Harrison Ave,
he has the thought that the sleeping human
race is the holy one. He pushes past the old
derelict high school on High School Rd, wonders
if its still haunted. It flashes on him: the day
he broke in, smack in the middle of the Nineties,
with buddies now long dead. He found a hammer,
stole it, never used it— it sat in his closet
until after graduation. He was smashed then, too.

#215

"Do I get to be the Friday night
Lady in Black? Do I get to molest
little boys in bunk beds? You can
take your pathetic baby games,
give 'em to your wetback pony friends
in Shitville, for all I care." That's where
the tape in her head ends, as it is Friday
night, and she's going nowhere near
those sleaze-ball sons of bitches. She
forces herself to vomit up an ice-cream
cone. She sends a one-liner out to one
of her text-lists— she's wearing a black
dress in her soul. She has no initials.

#431

They sit at the same pub on Limekiln
Pike and reminisce. Have they ever
wondered how he feels? They don't
realize he's driving past, and looks in
and sees them there. He still wants in,
and pretends not to. The sun set over
Glenside an hour ago. He pretends to
his family, always, that he has some
where to go, but he doesn't: he just
likes to drive. The old crew, the popular
girls of '95, are just as senseless, as
they drive their minds backwards, he
thinks. He's still a virgin, and desperate.
The business works the same everywhere.

#427

When she starts at Rizzo's, winds her way around
to Easton Road on Saturday night, it's with full
control, absolute mastery— here's where Glenside
stands, where it's going, here's why. The game
continues over to Limekiln Pike— Wawa, Tail
of the Whale. Not just the surface, but who's
hiding where, with what, & again why. Yet deep
in her heart, the ultimate why, life or death in
a sense of purpose, remains barren. The spider
in the glass case, frozen in the Humphrey's
Pest Control window, is to the point— Humphrey's
never answers anyway— the spider tells her
where the real action is. Then the beauty of it—
her sacrifice to/for Glenside— becomes just another
heist in the world. Limekiln Pike is too steep to climb.

#429

It’s Friday night, and she’s going nowhere
near those ass-fucking sons of bitches.
She forces herself to vomit up an ice-cream
cone. If she walks past Burholme Park, of
course he’ll be there, right there among
them. It’s not just that she expected more—
she banked her whole life on him having
a little class. Over at Burholme, they’ve got
splendor going in the grass. Nothing can
bring back the casual hours. Though it’s
past dark, kids are still driving putts. The
guys wonder whether they’ll get hit.

#512

They told me later; she was afflicted with shortness
of breath. I held down what I held down from
the portal-way of PNC Bank. When she stepped
into Easton Road, I had to object. From the wee
hours of a night in late spring, the gauntlet I laid
down was the standard one. It's just that my guy
at the Glenside Septa Station across the street
developed a fixation, because she showed up again
a week later, wheezing. Now, I have no choice
but to establish: nobody fucked her, OK? I didn't,
he didn't, my idiot stepbrother didn't, & you
didn't either, you moron. Jesus. You act like you've
never seen a blonde before. Now we're short of breath—

#727

I.
Out past the Septa station, Easton Road turns residential.
They had Pilot A on patrol last night, & our prize
partridge manifested before him there in tee & panties. Did
he do something? He did. Suffice it to say, the current situation
came up, & they confirmed an unholy alliance I need hardly
enumerate, except to note that by our standards, he fucked her
all night long. The PNC morons still say they fucked her,
too. The patrol moving in to sub for them… cocks out.
Meanwhile, the blonde (ours) shifted back to Elkins Park
for some reason, so that the Glenside marriage can go on,
& won't put her clothes back on before dawn.

II.
She resents Glenside for turning everything into a porno.
She likes the ice skating rink, she thinks to herself. She
likes Elkins Park Square, chaste after midnight— ghouls, goblins.
That's where, they hear, she is— Wall Park to the Square
& back, carrying him around in her guts. Needless to
say, they don't like him much here. Somebody left a key
bloodstain on a rock by the creek, a razor on a swing.
Dark times for her, who's trying the two-house life, or,
as they call it in Glenside, fucking the zig-zag pig.
She pledges allegiance to the zig-zag. He watches her
from a distance, wood hidden. Others, he sees, are more obvious.

#672

"That Natalie Wood asshole was just in here, now
I have to do clean-up. I want you to know that
you can't just get blowjobs on our watch without
bringing in your own clean-up people. This is
the last time I'm willing to do this for you guys."

He shuffles out of there, even more conceited
than he should be, he thinks, because he has
her house staked out, the whole nine yards, &
an in to show up in her room, get real the right
way, as she also does, as he's never done. If it's
not too real for you, he'll say, pistol half-concealed.

#494

It’s Friday night (Saturday morning), they’re going
very near her indeed. Having (as they watched) scrawled
an oh-so-despairing missive to one of her girlfriends,
she stripped down to her panties (they snickered),
took too many pills, and was now comatose on a bed
that clearly hadn’t been made in weeks. What they
bothered to ricochet over to Burholme was simple—
this one’s not a problem. Agree with her, flatter her
sense that she’s a sage, not a whiner (Cassandra, one
of the guys thinks), she’ll fuck you all night long, too.
They’ve noticed, from Cheltenham, both here, in
Glenside & Elkins Park, it’s been a summer of blondes—
they all think they’re special, want special lives. This
one gives the loudest screech, and has (they can’t resist)
the biggest jugs. Her dude is in the pocket, under us.

#499

The drive that matters, the money drive, always puts
his head (finally) in a groovy place. He's parked in
the Wawa lot; the sign's been given, he won't be molested.
Good old Heather, Miss F, from a class above him at
CHS, just walked in & out without buying anything, in
a brown raincoat, so he knows: Rizzo's is in on things
tonight. You're not, he knows, supposed to equate
dealing with the oneness of the universe, but he does,
because, although it's a bit chillier than it should be,
he's got his cock out for Heather forever. The pills
kicked in. The car's solid. Rizzo's has both of their
backs. And, most sublimely of all, he's not needed on
Easton Road at all tonight. His racket stays on Limekiln.
He'll stay high, in peace, with homeboys here, too. Done.

#573

She had the kid, no one knew— he didn't either,
the putz. She was apparently in a Puerto Rican mood.
He didn't realize the whole West Side Story enterprise
was going on behind his back, and I went crazy,
watching the dance spectacle. I can't not think it's
funny now, her still sitting on the fence, as if she
could look normal there, as if what she does in Center
City could still ricochet to us as something that
matters. I'm only bringing this up because she was
in Jenkintown last night to see a movie, with some
other new putz-guy she has around. She gave my scout
something to give to me, and I liked it, her being a Jet
all the way. We gave her limited privileges with our
sheets in Center City. Another putz, or him again, no dance—

#567

I.
Always with the cheap shots, Danny. Always with the sense
that more than half of you and your bullshit judgments were
just arbitrary, just made up trash you used to push people
down because you knew you could. Now that I've got
the pistol to your head, I'm announcing that you will now
sign this voucher, OK? From this day forward, you can't
rank us, configure us in any untoward way, shake up our
deals unless you can prove a reason for doing so, or put us
in the hapless position all over again of being vassals for
a bunch of lunatic brats. And before you leave, one more
thing— I'm handing you back the spreadsheets for the last
six months, because we both know they're fictionalized nonsense,
& before I shoot your feet I'm willing to be circumspect—

II.
Cheltenham: if you want to get out, you better have a gun.
The word on the street (and this just happened) is that Danny
had a piece pulled on him as he sat & listened. The leader
demanded leniency. He signed the voucher & left. Now, I'm
pulling back on my investments with his group, thanking
the Lord in heaven I didn't grow up in the land of cheap-shots
& below-the-belts (or Hatfields & McCoys, what have you). The leader
I mentioned is leaving, anyway, to a place less mean-spirited against,
well, everybody. And he's willing to vouch (I love this) for the fact
that he's not really from around there anymore. Who is, these days?

#447

The spook she was— he suspected, as they rose
to leave her, that she'd not only never left Cheltenham,
but that she was chiding him personally for not
having resolved the general mess in a sanitized
package. As they turned onto Easton Road, he
finally said what he had to say out loud. Then, he
declared himself exonerated— there was no mess
for him. He wanted to live in a real action place,
one that mattered in the world— he got his wish.
The jalopy was spotted from 7-11, headed back
towards Wyncote. They awaited her signal, as she
rose to leave, which came in a 30% tip, in cash.

#507

I.
The Junior Prom deposited her into a crawl space.
He took liberties with her— hands all over the place.
Now, she was trapped in a basement with him,
the whole gang, there to reinforce the rightness
of being top dogs in the class, which they (as she
knew) only half were. Like a mermaid from
a shipwreck, she rose to lock herself in the bathroom,
pill up. He was human seaweed to her, sequestered
with the boys on the opposite side of the basement.
The crash was heavy— when she woke, it was almost
noon, most of the gang gone. They'd spited her.

II.
They were washed up on a shore. Bonded against
an impostor who had briefly been among them
(Megan threw a party at his house, when he lived in a rich one),
they could only be semi-stooges until they got him
out somehow. A hands-on treatment, he thought,
is what the situation calls for; I'm the exorcist here.
You knew who's being cast out. No huddling in the dugout,
no getting him off, no frolicking by Tookany
Creek. Me. I'm who you're looking for. He
repeated it to himself, even as she slept, far
away. The fire of it ravished the basement, awake.

#419

She put down the coffee cup and started
to tear up. Jesus, you can't even take her
to Starbucks. He leaned into his pumpkin
scone. The barista was cute, and she was
shooting him a look. Myers. He remembered
passing it once. There was a glare off the
blacktop (or something) that hurt his eyes.
So one of her old friends died. They used to
hang out there. Etcetera. And now this. The
barista herself thought, that callous prick. He's
like a little kid.

#529

Knives thrust into wooden tables at the drop
of a name— factions squaring off, bedraggling
an endless summer— here they sat at the Glenside
Pub, securely fastened to life or otherwise, glared
down the throats of their enemies, into their lagers.
Nick, C.J. and the rest were telling stories. It was
Jeremy, they said, who was covered in leeches, like
me. I had hijacked his potency, mojo, what have you.
Stop midflight, adjust the altitude, right? Spreadsheets
held their own knives. Step back, Jack. C.J. towers
(he thinks), Nick dazzles (he thinks), puddings'
right there, chumps. The blonde (his) leers.
Easton Road chokes all over again. He steers.

Knives thrust into wooden tables gave Nick
a misty-eyed look— as was later learned, he was
stealing again. Too many secret alliances, too
many mystifications, Nick that summer was
securely fastened to nothing. He was the kind
of guy who liked to think of nothing as something
solid, himself the master of a solid kind of nothing,
manifested by him, whatever spreadsheet was up.
A dead duck's a dead duck, dazzling or not. He'll
never mistake himself for flesh & blood (invert),
never protect himself falsely (invert), never ask
how he got to the places he may arrive at. I thought
I knew then where he was. But he got caught.

#548

I.
Beheaded? A contestant on Wheel of Fortune, to see
how much of his soul he can singe in one night: beheaded?
All because I wouldn't save him. Not that it was my
responsibility to do so (car turns onto Harrison Avenue,
parks). The encampment area at the corner of Harrison
& Limekiln shows off, at this time of night, the monstrosity,
Glenside Elementary, as an act of architectural vandalism;
my miserable wife won't talk to me, at first blood she
starts to wheeze, I (the king) can't help her either, because
I (the king) am a peon here. It flew off with the first
birds of dawn, and with Nick's blood-soaked head on
a pike: my soul. Now, for eighteen months, it's gone.

II.
Halfway over the Atlantic Ocean, there it was, affixed to
the cockpit's glass to deliver a Lenny Bruce-ian monologue:
Nick's severed head. How nice of you to show up, Nick,
but I have a responsibility here, these people's lives are all
depending on me, so… *the nose knows. What the nose knows,*
the nose knows, but what you don't know the nose knows, is how
you smell to me, and your past smells like ass, *for real.* He knows,
he's not only not supposed to sweat, he's supposed to
manifest nothing but the most masterful ten-hour coolness.
He does, but only through years of rigorous practice. His
insides are not as numb as they were when the whole
sword-blade heist happened; everything in him stews.
Glenside Elementary re-delivers to him its terrible news.

#554

From the angle the bathroom door was left ajar,
the Pub crowd knew (it was a flag) someone had
fallen. The inside crowd, drunk on heat, wasted on
weed, saw the evidence, guessed (correctly) it was
Nick. Heat trailed in from Easton Road, numbness
built in the crowd, the door was slammed shut, as
participants in the madness tried (shakily, achingly)
to sleep the thing off, somewhere else. Ricochets
from Limekiln Pike, the usual, but with another flag
that someone at Wawa was gloating again. Ensigns
as the sun went down, but Nick would never be there
again. The crowd knew him to be irreplaceable, sans
any sense of caring, though others might cry on the inside.

From the angle the bathroom door got re-opened,
they laughed, the sunset crew, gearing up for a night
of TV, maybe the Phillies. The score was known, yet
one of them went for a walk, all the way to 7-11, just
to taste something else, he thought. They'd be missing
in action for while, that crew, if he read right. He looked
across the street at West Coast Video, thought of Nick.
He'd been in a room once with Nick, watching a movie.
Nightmare on Elm Street? When someone has to end
that way… he can't finish the thought. Later that night,
he just understands something, about life, about Glenside,
about drugs, about all of it, which seems simple but isn't—
it can only be good if you stay yourself, like Nick. Amen.

#496

Church Road back through Wyncote, towards
Elkins Park, I had some things to say back to him.
The real action you were looking for came at a cost,
OK? Because now, when we go out, we attract

spooks. You don't know what might've happened
when we left, but I'm sure it wasn't nice. I stopped,
then, thinking of a picture which had become famed
in our circle— the pariah and the Amish high priest.

The pariah was our responsibility. The high priest
was at the bottom of a bunch of seas. I said, it
turned out badly, OK? I want to say, for the record,
that your sense of being exonerated is a bullshit one.

Now, we're the criminals too. It turned out badly.
Passing, I thought Wall Park laughed at us, as usual.

#501

Tail of the Whale watched him, sitting in
the little Honda, outside Wawa, & laughed.
She grew even more exuberant when he
got to see Heather sashay in & out, attired
for an earlier season on a rainy night. This
guy, she thought, is one of my brothers, I
like to see him around when I can, even
if we're two ships passing in the night. She
stands in the light drizzle, in the parking lot,
smoking a butt, reminiscing to herself about
when they all used to meet at Glenside Elementary
on sultry days, do whatever in endless summers.
She doesn't think, she knows: things go round in
endless circles; one of the circles has to be God, right?

#482

Look: we had a guy planted on the Wall Park
side of the creek for the entire night. You want
to tell us that you can just knock a guy off in
front of him, & us, without us getting upset,
that's a no can do. You saw him
yourself: he's tough, he can take care of himself,
he's an OK trooper. But

"We refuse to take dumb risks right now
because things are getting bloody, & we
chose a side, OK? The extra three hours
were unacceptable, so if you want to make it
up to us, we'll ask you to do it right here,
right now. You spend three hours in our
tank, or we cut the lines. And no bitching,
& we say who's accounted for, & you don't."

Later, he stood his ground in a fenced-in
courtyard adjacent to Glenside Elementary,
for precisely three hours. Department store
dummies did their dance, he fended them
off like they were dilettantes, which they
were. He thought that night there was
something metaphysical about what it
meant to be *accounted for*. God watched—

#511

I.
Look, here's the deal: I drove him over to the Old
York Road Little League fields, we sat in the lot
as though I was waiting for somebody, then a cop
pulled into the lot and shooed us out of there. He
didn't react like I'd insulted him or shit on him in
any way, and I do know why: he's an innocent kid,
OK? He's not only not who you say he is, he's good,
he's likeable, and you guys are full of shit as usual.
When you find yourself losing again with this kid,
don't come crying to me, you know why? I quit. I
refuse to waste my time doing bullshit errands for
you guys, punishing innocent kids as though they're
as fucked in the head as you are, putting myself at risk.

II.
At that point, Danielle was allowed to crash in Howard's
bedroom. I really was more or less the king by then,
yet I had an errand to do in there. She was barely clothed,
she really did want to get fucked, literally, that night. Too bad.
Howard I had to address. Everybody knows the legend
of that special ride he gave our would-be nemesis,
looking to find something that wasn't there about
an (actual) friend who deserved better. Respect. Even as
I saw the problem go around the block that no one
wanted me in the house. Relent. I run Glenside
now (I did, then), and I shall (I did) leave Howard
a special note— congrats for being a human being, you
son of a bitch. You've got an easy month coming up, from me.

#537

Black Rainbow ruled the roost then. That night
they played in Ambler, we tried to find the Ambler
Cabaret, wound up at Reed's Country Store in Blue Bell.
So: Reed's Country Store shows up at PNC to re-divorce
someone she never married, with Elkins Park tales
& torments, & we all go down the slippery slope
towards recaptured virginity. The ricochet receives
the ring; Wall Park gets to stop & toke up; Glenside
groans under packages it can only half-carry; we have
to get our jollies throwing darts at her metaphoric,
wicker-wrought spread. The Jetta, a manual, got totaled a long time
ago. Shifting gears: the Broad Axe Tavern awaits— why
we have a special Manhattan mixed for her, only we know.

#519

I.
Drunken antics in the Poconos, the letter dictated itself.
They played tennis, when they were little kids. She stopped
the game to deliver a speech just to him, for him. This is who
we could be somewhere else, she said. This is who we could be here.
I had to remind him that he was sitting in a gay bar with a bunch
of queers, who were playing their own tennis games. Thanks
for that serve, he said. Another winner. We kicked his ass out. So, no
more walking through the park and reminiscing, OK? Please
remind all the boys that you must ask permission to say
sporty things, or sport around with having a straight past. Please.

II.
Megan was strung out on me, he inscribed. I was
a guy she used to fuck, & when we fucked, she got strung
out on me. I was a hard case, she was a bunch of rungs above,
but she let me string her up nonetheless. She thought
I was beautiful. Why it matters, why I sit here writing this, is
because I was asleep the whole time, cresting on a wave
into nothingness, & I never realized that to be that far into
someone has to ricochet internally, & if it doesn't I find
myself again to be the head-case I don't want to be.
Or maybe the head-case writing this has now wandered
into a life as merciless as a slew of fags dissecting Clint Eastwood
movies, but remembers the things he remembers.

#561

I.

As I watched him fly commercial airliners over
the North American continent, try his hand at
farming, bide miserable time in Glenside like he'd
never left, he was the man who would be king.
No one needs to remind us about his developed
spine, quick-minded reactions; yet the heart part
went missing, & he didn't find it in the cockpit or
the hay-stacks. In Glenside, as in all other places,
we saw what we saw: if you can't hang, you hang.
He was missing when we all finally got high in peace.

II.

What I learned: the kingdom of heaven is right there
in the sky. If you can make a steady course through
heaven, no one can hold back the earth itself anointing
you king. The chickens & pigs know it, too. The soil
knows it. Even good-old deadbeat Easton Road, still
as a graveyard at 3 am, knows it, delivers a positive
verdict. Somewhere there's a man (that's me) who
unites heaven & earth, a hierophant, & the king among
hierophants can kick righteous ass shoving the whole
enterprise into motion. I am the king who not only
hangs in heaven, but can hang heaven up wherever I go.

#413

All piled into the house on Woodlawn.
They had me do all the old jokes, as though
I were a wind-up toy. Most of them had
never been in the house before. It was
about to be abandoned anyway; but my
mind still clings to it. I smoked pot there
for the first time. I got on the road to my
first hook-up at a party, & I punched a
Hulk Hogan poster's crotch. Now even
this pile-up was fifteen years ago. The shed
in the back was filled with smoke, as were we—

& no one who was there that night, high,
hasn't been abased. Wisdom has its
palaces that look more like park benches.
Youth's privilege is to be in love with
life. I was in love with life that night, too—
the crush of strange kids in an Abington
house, movements towards more weed.
We sat on a curb and planned more
mischief. The Universe had some mischief
planned for us, too. For those of us who
live on the curb and nowhere else— a requiem.

#685

Revolution, turmoil, discord— but the economy for those
nights, Cheltenham-Abington, was about something you &
yours never cared for. If you were us, which you
were not, you put having a good time at the top
of the economy. North-East hi-jinx, start at
the bowling alley on Rising Sun Avenue, back
into Cheltenham, pick up the twins, then, of course,
it's already time to smoke up. And so on, for the rest
of the night. The crest of the wave didn't crash 'til
Willow Grove. Crank up WDRE because they're
standing right in front of us. We're everywhere.
Brixton watches, carrying a guitar. You there?

II. More Apparition Poems

#1632

The guy with the hedge-clipper
had a heart attack at the train
station and died, that's what they

said. I only saw him a few times, I
wish I knew more, he had skin
always tanned, weather-beaten, in

fact that's how I remember him,
as always looking beaten, but his
kids were obnoxious, now they

have to move. I'm looking forward
to seeing who moves in next door,
because the guy before also had a

heart attack and died. What is it about
this street, he thinks as he hangs up
the cell phone; what needs clipped?

#1653

There were three clues placed in his
path that night, that were stones in
his pathway. The first was a one-life
bitch talking about hierarchies of

gender. The second was a minor poet
doing histrionics which needn't be
enumerated. The third was a brutal
rapist that jumped off the Golden

Gate Bridge, but failed to fall all the
way down. All these clues led him to
sit in coffee-shops, bars, nightclubs,
looking for souls to confide in about

that night, how vacant the roads were,
how deep the moon was set in heaven.
He had waited, just as they said. At the
appointed time, he had seen what he

was supposed to see. The problem was,
seeing this made him unhappy enough
that he walked away from the road and
the three clues, never came back. Now,

here he was. The coffee was taken black.

#1672

Poets are boring
people, she said,
because they want
to fuck words more
than they want to
fuck. I said, I like
fucking people as
much as I like words.
You're no poet, she
said, unzipping me.
I passed on pieces
of a universe where
the down places go
up. When I hurled,
it landed in a heap
at her feet. It was
both red and white,
together from senses
of a lost cross between
us. I sputtered out.
Is this what you've
come to, she said,
spitting. I couldn't
speak from being
rolled. I crumpled,
threw in my hand,
betted on being home
by four a.m. Feeling
rumpled, ten-sheeted,
I gave her tattoo a fling.

She told me her changed
plans. It ended in drinks
poured down like so
many rain-buckets. I
was waiting for a charge,
& when it came, said
to her, don't fake me
out, or even try, I see
your deal, and I'm
leaving now, to which
she flamed, blared teal. Abalone.

#1674

I leaned on my dashboard hands,
propped myself up for the surge,
sparked as I plugged away, Vulcan
at a soot-scummy forge, beneath me

Venus thinking of grey pigmentation,
behind the wheel the music blared, I
went through the light into the wash,
but came out more dirty than I was

when I entered: smudged coal, rubber.
Were we covered? The Venusian you
were could only jealously repeat what
you'd already said. More work for Vulcan.

#1163

In the dream I lied, I said
I wasn't going to make a
pass, then I cast my arms
around you (slinky black
dress), held you close to
me (wall length windows
around), we buttered in,
when I woke I saw you,
your Polynesian sister, you
cried in the dream, it wasn't
you, tears like sea-weed—

#1149

I have always wanted
to drink your blood;
all these long years I
have waited to taste it

mixed in red wine, in
a silver chalice, quick
flick of a dagger at our
wrists, communion of

a dark hue, eye and you—
ensorcelled to love & die.
Death between us can't
not be a kind of feast.

As the next level or layer
is shed, it's inverse onions.
I'll keep your blood around
my neck if you will mine.

#1566

Your voice came through her (I heard it distinctly,
how you curl around your vowels), then I knew that
the voice you gave me (silvery, icicle smooth) was
false, that it had all been a ruse— the deeper layer

is between you two, I'm a cardboard cut-out. I'm
a big advertisement for my own rod, not much
else, but we've been here for years, with pretenses
that these things have to happen, & they don't.

The male as pathetic— the voice with useless grain
in it. I want you to see how hungry I am, right? Not
just to be in you, but to settle as something concrete
in your guts. But the authority is in the icicles.

#1644

Oh for the sentience of books,
Kant once said, or should have,
and if he didn't it is difficult for
me to accept his critiques, as they
hinge on acknowledgements of inward
sentience of beings, and books are
beings, even as they are-in-the-world.
As for this, this is action poetry, but
I have no intention of driving my car
into a tree, unless I feel the tree has
so much sentience I would benefit
from the action, & I don't doubt
that this could be the case.

#1059

Bandaged head, nine staves, I'm
the guy that can take it forever, I
come up in your reading at the top
of the cross, drop the staves on your

candle, & as the reading ends: she
takes the one stave I need the most,
to tie the thing up, at the crosses'
bottom— what comes to pass,

unfortunately, is the same silly
explosion we always come to, as
the two fools pitch off the cliff,
nipped at at the heels by the one

you call dog, but who may not be,
also as usual. The cards' orgasm is laughter—

#1112

I.

“Fuck art let’s dance”
only we didn’t dance,
we fucked, and when
we fucked, it was like

dancing, and dancing
was like art, because
the climax was warm,
left us wanting more—

how can I know this
dancer from the dance?
O brightening glance,
how tight the dance

was, and the sense that
pure peace forever was
where it had to end for
both of us, only your

version was me dead,
after I had permanently
died inside you like the
male spider always does—

II.

Pull me towards you—

woven color patterns
create waves beneath
us, tears buoy bodies

to a state beyond "one"
into meshed silk webs—
not every pull is gravitational—
as two spiders float upwards,

I say to you (as we multiply
beyond ourselves) "those
two are a bit much, their
sixteen legs making love"

#1113

Her money, she repeats to herself, connects her
to the whole world. She still sashays into
Joan Shepp on Walnut, even if she can't
buy anything. The fabrics, the cuts of the
dresses— this is who she is.
Somewhere in the back of her mind, she
knows she's been tossed like a rogue piece
of fabric, & the hands that cut her have made
her inelegant. To handle this cloth with dishrag
hands, is to wade knee-deep into the darkness
of the suburbs, frozen like jell-o around her.

#1505

to make love is to be taught,
over & over again, how far
into each other we can go,
but you, who failed my class,
must be taught, over & over
again, how to pass into real
ecstasy (these unholy caresses):
wake up, *wake up, the bells, the bells!*

& as she glides down Pine Street,
stars are joined by the moon & sun,
begin a dance on the shore of
this corner (13th), blue-black,
orbs wedging crystals between us—

#1503

This I tell you—
you can live or
die, a tramp or
sage, planted in
sand or earth, I
will rot in earth,
still-birthed, blues
will taste black in
you, like asphalt.

#540

In the pregnant pause
between your mouth's
movement and a gush
of thick metrics, I had
a vision of sun-dappled
red hair that must have
been yours, because we
were in a forest. Since it

was 1918, I did not have
a stun-gun to plummet it
back to the grungy soul-
morass from which it hung—
but the forest's frail pomp
brought green into mistletoe
so that the kiss came out kid.

#554

Your game; every moved piece moves me.
Every dive on/off board is a snap-tailed fish.
More than ducks & fishes, we are two
checkered pieces. There is no mate to be
checked, but a deck to be cut (I say this
because if I've got game, I've got you, your tails).
Yet we play in a not-empty stadium, & one
who watches knows what we're doing. Pieces
are being thrown onto the field to confuse us.
All this, as if, right? We're lost; we both lose.
Or, someone needs to put us back in the ocean
again, where we can pass for at least half-normal—
alone together, in pieces ourselves, but game—

#557

Your position's on waves, on
fish, on the whole question
of ocean, I said. Especially
considering your taste for
red snapper. It was her belly
that flopped onto mine, in
such a way that when the
waves rose, they hit us so
that the mast held us both up.
Well, she said, if you threw
out your fucking metaphors,
you'd see I was buck naked.

#563

red dress, its
that, *that*, pink,
filtered, light, in
coming, through,
hasty, embraces,
bread, thrown,
square, what's,
breasts, blues,
at least, I half,
drool,
ruthless—

#543

Yes, I say, you can have this sweat
being exhaled as when I loitered
nightly for a kiss, but could taste
a little phlegm; but you don't hear.

I'm sad as it's like a dream in which
we can't touch. I strike in mad trance,
knife unsheathed, plunged down
the throat of your bed. Waves of sweat:

look, I say, you just got fucked but
not over; almost, at least, as though
we were eighteen again, dry humping—
bodies metaphor for a realer reality.

#544

I'm learning
that the taste
of shit is
spiritually
rewarding,
because
humility is
endless,
your cunt
really isn't.

#1194

my life is so insane, I live
on a thin silver edge like
a crescent moon—

it is necessary we fight
for things not naturally
given, or provisionally—

we reconnect our nerves,
blue, red, multiple streams
run between us, nothing

left to say, as we pierce
into animal existence on
a freeway's rapid dawn—

#1489

campus: she’s in an
elevator, mascara-face,
beady blue eyes, clothes
emphasize her figure; she
is being told about “illicit
sex with Julia” in a classic:

she saw it
happen, wants two razors
to slash our wrists, we got
away with it (it was obvious,
SO obvious)

behind accents
that scream “Philadelphia” I
derive this lesson: if you’ve
got to fool around, at least
kill an idiot in the process.

#537

She is far gone into her own un-nested sense
of being done. I can't go on as one, she said;
deep dirt is dredged from depths of us, can't
be kissed. She left her regrets. I tied one on.

How it ends: tied to an old oak, because what's
in the ground is solid (as only death can be).
I'm the muck by the riverbanks before the trees.
But this landscape is surreal, grey, the wrong way.

#1131

She goes to a lake, thinks of me there,
looks into copses, breathes in forests,
sleeps in log cabins, picks flowers, early
autumn quivers, & waits to be told

by sprung nature what she already
knows; there's no getting out of this
one, for either of us— not this love.
It's just that the ideals are now laid

to rest, of who we could've been
all around, as the decent citizens we
wanted to be. Mauve sunrise, exquisite,
that's in the bank; but we know now

what isn't; & the bank's composition.

#1144

The truth of things
is a snuff flick; each
day we are impaled
and impaling, razor
sharp, red-spattered,
phantom yellow eyes
peeking through bed-
room windows; this
angle is, if our doors

were cleansed, much
more ultimate than
graces and angels;
the truth of blood,
subtle destruction,
everyone implicated,
everyone culpable.

#1246

God is an amusement park
(among other things) filled
with rides, clowns, hot dogs,
beer, circus mirrors, bearded
ladies, strong men, log flumes,
curious tourists (who have
flown here all the way from
Vermont), jaded locals (who
sit in corners, smoking), and,
ultimately, commodity-crazed
business men, who honestly
think they believe, live on
their knees, yet cast twenty-
foot arms into multiple pockets.

#1229

The encounter-poem came like this:
she came at me with a genital-jab, then
an uppercut aimed at my intellect, sucker-
punched my art and, when I was prostrate,
fished me out of my pants, rode herself silly.

#1200

She asked me how I did it,
I turned my arm over, said
look at these veins, I write
with them, they are a well,
she said well that's all very
dramatic, but those veins
should be used for life—

if your blood is working
double-time, your heart will
only get half of what it
needs. She hurt me, I said
leave my blood alone, you
can never understand, but
her full house beat my flush—

#1575

This is a dominant stream, meant to
flow through minds with channels I
can tweak— think of yourself as you
might stand before seven cups, point
only if you must, but shrouded girls
with raised arms, jewels, castles, and
snakes may be better guides, I'm just
the hollowness of sea-shells, in which
you might hear how forces wave into
flesh, what roars come from salt-water—
the man recedes, the over-soul ascends.

#539

So much richness reduced to a book taken
from this shelf. All passion conduced to no
end but what exists in her mind alone, truth
burned off in erratic myths she made up to

make off with a piece of my cake. So easy to
make her break, if I cared enough to try, yet
there'd be no reason why I should, after eight
years. She took it off: it was here. It's nothing.

#1142

Desperation is the need
to be loved sans reason,
& I can't stop you either,
so I'll be happy to watch as
you dig a grave of ignorance—
someday you'll hate me, but
I have no other way to love—

she crawled down the stairs
at 4 a.m. to smoke a Marlboro
Red in peace, out on the porch,
knowing tomorrow she'd
outshine those dimwitted stars,
cracked & fractured from
overuse, in a pie-high sky—

#1570

To wake in darkness
with a voice you can
hear as hers— sense
fiery angels spraying
colors on two nude
bodies— I'm hung
on angels' wings, my
mind vacillates, what
happens does so as I
bifurcate between her,
angels, as I channel this
tableaux she absorbs into
a test she passes me on.

#1631

Teeth, I tell her, not really
talking to myself, are what
make stars real, you either
have them or you don’t, sink
yours in (she does, meeting
my lineage in tongues), but
she’s not listening, as she carries
millions in images that heave
all around her torso. I marvel.
Nothing coy, just this collection
of pristine atoms that heave,
this wet goddess. We make
love past the millions twice.

#281

A small unframed painting
of a many-armed Bodhisattva
hangs over the bed where
you imagine us wrapped, rapt
I do not deny this rapture
I make no enlightened claims
I have no raft to float you
Hard as it is for you to
believe, no mastery came to
me when this thing happened
I have two arms, no more
I am only marginally sentient
I cannot save you or her
The painting is better than us
you're welcome to it

#102

Because I fucked you too, dear,
I happen to know you're frigid. But I
never saw you build a Bible out of bad
sex, or proselytize your botched attempts
at self-destruction before. Don't you
think I look like James Dean? Aren't I
sufficiently tortured? This leather coat,
my cycle, all the accoutrements of urban
hipster-ness; this is where I end, not with
a bang but with a whimper. Kill or be killed, sister.

#112

It’s company of flesh and blood
I need, your blonde head beneath,
pillows scattered around us like
confetti, memories of loneliness
suddenly quaint as “thou,” your
feet in the air like hung mobiles,
all the thousands of words left
behind in throats overtaken by
cries (awe before near-extinction),
but you are not here, you are
just a lack, something scrawled
on a series of sheets, useful
only to tell me that words have
holes in them where nothing fits.

#238

If she drinks herself
to death in London,
I'll cry like a bourgeois
runt, I said. It's not just
that you're dead— the
kind of discipline that
might affix itself (bourgeois
runts have a bias towards
life) to shots is— she
chewed me out about this—
wait, what did she say?

#271

“Never forget: Cleopatra had a big
nose, an ugly mug, took accidental
drunken shits in bed. How do I
know this? Because I was there!”

It’s not just he’s insane, he knows
I have a big nose too, and all this
just because he saw an ex crossing
the Walnut Street Bridge, her nose

up in the air where her legs used to be.
How does he know this? Don’t ask.

#147

I keep imagining Abington at night.
The sense in the air is this: we can't
be as far down as we are. The guy
tending bar here (in this dreamed-
of place) is an old friend; his angle
on the world is, always, satire. But
satire depends on people being willing
to laugh. And if I still sit in my car in
the parking lot of Abington High leering
at girls, I can still laugh at that too.
The Dairy Queen on Limekiln Pike
remains the same. The girls still like
ice-cream in the summer-time, right?

#148

Everyone knows she has about two years
to live. The blonde babe who runs shipments
sits smoking at the Esquire Bar with a guy
who still has the rat-tails he had at Cheltenham.
How do you behave when you have two
years to live? Well, you might try making
your body a weapon. You might bop around
shaking your hips so that no one might
touch. Or fellating the pickle which comes
with your sandwich. You might. But as you
dance on nothingness, someone watching
you is also watching his watch.

#149

"They pulled a gun on him at the diner
down the street. He was halfway through
his burger. The Greeks who own the place
didn't care. They got bought off a long
time ago. I eat there for free sometimes.
He probably eats there for free too. They
don't play sides, that family. So if you
want a place that's your place (as we
used to have), you better have more
money than the other guys, which we
don't anymore. And it'll take you a year to nail this guy too."

#151

Last time they met, she kept
spitting on the cement outside the
bistro like a sailor. A unique
composite, I thought as I heard
this, of two temperaments that
just can't bite on earth. She keeps
(he said) her panties on in bed.
What did I tell him? I didn't. I
spit on the cement outside the
ship we happened to be sailing on.
To spit: an abstract gesture, of
the kind popular in the arts sixty
years ago; it counts as "action" now.

#152

"There is nothing shielded here,
only once things are held within,
interiors become future shields,"
yet we can only employ shields where
the past is concerned. I happen to
know the visionary deadness which
permeates these images is too murky
to give us any kind of present shield, & that
means you too, darling, artist as
ripe for decay as a February bramble,
a tree in early March, this my garden,
this gallery engulfed in a whirlpool—
in falls Heidegger, back out again.

#159

Things is tough. I need a break, pal. He
threw the mitt and softball into the
back seat of the station wagon. He
thought of stopping at the EsquireBar
at Five Corners. The gang was
going elsewhere, but he needed a break.
They kept saying things to him about
his wife. She wasn't just a little hoity-toity,
but a psycho hose-beast. He thought he
was moving up in the world. He stood by
the station wagon. Everyone had left. It
was the end of the goddamned season,
too, he was married, a kid on the way, and
he knew himself for a corpse. As
an airplane flew over, he wished he had
just jumped out of it. Things is tough.

#158

A piece of road kill on the New Jersey Turnpike,
scuttling into the city to steal from the old West
Philly co-op, to cook lentils over a fire in woods
somewhere near the Pine Barrens, this woman
who deserted me for a man who could and has
brought her three things: no children, abject
poverty, and sterling marijuana. It's to be smoked as
no last resort but as a means of being so wired into
walking deadness that living out of an old Celica
seems celestial as a canto of Byron's, perhaps the
one she used to recite to me— "tis' but a worthless
world to win or lose," and believe me, baby, you
don't know the half of it, but you're not listening,
you're stoned, you always were, oh the charm of you.

Adam Fieled is a poet based in Philadelphia. He has released five print books: "Opera Bufa" (Otoliths, 2007), "When You Bit..." (Otoliths, 2008), "Chimes" (Blazevox, 2009), "Apparition Poems" (Blazevox, 2010), and "Equations" (blue & yellow dog press, 2011), as well as e-books like "Beams" (Blazevox, 2007), "Disturb the Universe: The Collected Essays of Adam Fieled" (Argotist e-books, 2010), and "Mother Earth" (Argotist e-books, 2011). He has work in or forthcoming in Jacket, Cordite, Pennsound, Poetry Salzburg Review, the Argotist, Great Works, Decanto, Tears in the Fence, Upstairs at Duroc, and in the & Now Awards Anthology from Lake Forest College Press. A magna cum laude graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, he also holds an MFA from New England College and an MA from Temple University.